

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-35 are pending.

Claims 17-22 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1-16 and 23-35 stand rejected.

By this Amendment, claims 1-5, 8, 11-12, 14-16, 23-25, 27, 30-31, 33 and 35 are amended and claims 6-7 and 26 are cancelled without prejudice.

No new matter is presented by the claim amendments. Support for the claim amendments can be found throughout the original specification and, for example, in the original specification at page 11, lines 22-26, and Figs. 1D, 1E and 5.

Examiner Interview

An Examiner interview was conducted between Applicants' Representative Eric Berkowitz and Examiner Talbot on or around December 4, 2008. The Examiner is thanked for his efforts. In the Examiner Interview the Examiner clarified the rejection of claims 1-15 and 23-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Rejection of Claims 1-15 and 23-34 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

In the Office Action, at item 2, claims 1-15 and 23-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as being based on a disclosure which is not enabling.

In the Examiner Interview, the Examiner acknowledged that the specification is enabled for a cleaning part which is part of the mask film and that cleans a squeegee during reciprocation.

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 2 to include cleaning a squeegee using the squeegee cleaning part (or the formed plurality of depressions) during the squeezing operation to overcome the rejection regarding the inclusion of a cleaning step. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner regarding the Examiner's contention that the reciprocation of the squeegee to fill the holes is critical or essential to the practice of the invention. More particularly, the cleaning of the squeegee may be accomplished using any number of the

motions of squeegee including, for example, a reciprocation motion, a linear motion or a circular motion.

Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 1 and 2 are free from the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. Moreover, it is submitted that claims 3-5, 8-15, 23-25 and 27-34, by virtue of their dependency from claim 1 or 2, are free from this rejection as well. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

Rejection of Claims 1, 2 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

In the Office Action, at item 4, claims 1, 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

Claims 1, 2 and 4 have been amended to overcome this rejection.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

In the Office Action, at item 5, "claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as clearly anticipated by Takenaka et al." (JP 2001-213064, hereafter referred to as Takenaka).

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 is directed to a method for manufacturing a circuit board, and recites:

... forming a plurality of depressions in a first surface in the at least one squeegee area, each depression defining a perimeter portion, each perimeter portion having an elevation higher than the elevation of the first surface ...

That is, the elevation of each perimeter portion is higher than the elevation of the first surface.

As disclosed in the original specification at page 11, lines 25-27, if the elevation of the perimeter portion is lower than 3µm above the elevation of the first surface, removal of the paste bonded to an edge of the squeegee is hindered (i.e., "[a] height of swollen portion 7 is

preferably set not lower than 3 μ m. If it is lower than 3 μ m, an effect of removing paste bonded to an edge of a squeegee deteriorates").

Takenaka Reference

The Abstract of Takenaka, which is the only portion of Takenaka having an English language translation, discloses a squeegee and a paste removing part 3 provided on a mask 2. The paste removing part 3 in the figures of Takenaka is an angular portion disposed on top of mask 2. The figures of Takenaka do not show and the Abstract of Takenaka is silent regarding depressions in the mask surface and, more particularly, that such depressions define a perimeter portion, each perimeter portion having an elevation higher than the elevation of the mask surface.

Accordingly, claim 1 is submitted to patentably distinguish over Takenaka for at least the above-mentioned reasons.

Claim 3

Claim 3, which includes all of the limitations of claim 1, is submitted to patentably distinguish over Takenaka for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Rejection of Claims 1, 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

In the Office Action, at item 5, "claims 1, 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Kuroki et al." (JP 57-103862, hereafter referred to as Kuroki).

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 1

Claim 1 was previously discussed above.

Kuroki Reference

Kuroki, which is a Japanese language reference having a partial English language translation, discloses a screen print plate for filling conductor including a solid metal screen used for filling the conductor. A concavo-convex pattern is formed at a side of a periphery of a printing pattern and at a squeegee side of the screen printing plate. It is clear from Fig. 5(A)

that the elevation of the perimeter of the concavo-convex pattern 8 is not higher than the surface of element 9.

Accordingly, claim 1 is submitted to patentably distinguish over Kuroki for at least the above-mentioned reasons.

Claims 3 and 5

Claims 3 and 5, which include all of the limitations of claim 1, are submitted to patentably distinguish over Kuroki for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

Rejection of Claims 2, 5, 7-16, 23-24 and 26-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action, at item 9, claims 2, 5, 7-16, 23-24 and 26-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kuroki alone or Takenaka in combination with Kuroki.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 7 and 26

Claims 7 and 26 have been cancelled without prejudice.

Accordingly, the rejection of these claims is now moot.

Claim 2

Claim 2, which includes similar but not identical features to those of claim 1, is submitted to patentably distinguish over Kuroki alone or Takenaka in combination with Kuroki for at least similar reasons to those of claim 1.

Claims 5, 8-16, 23-24 and 27-35, which include all of the limitations of claim 1 or claim 2, are submitted to patentably distinguish over Kuroki alone or Takenaka in combination with Kuroki for at least the same reasons as claim 1 or claim 2.

Rejection of Claims 6 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Office Action, at item 10, claims 6 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kuroki alone or Takenaka in combination with Kuroki in further combination with Kozo et al. (JP 2001-7514, hereafter referred to as Kozo).

Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 6

Claim 6 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Accordingly, the rejection of this claim is now moot.

Claim 25

Claim 25, which includes all of the limitations of claim 2, is submitted to patentably distinguish over Kuroki alone or Takenaka in combination with Kuroki for at least the same reasons as claim 2.

The addition of Kozo does not overcome the deficiencies of Kuroki alone or Takenaka in combination with Kuroki. This is because, Kozo, which is in the Japanese language and includes only an English language translation of the Abstract, is silent regarding "a perimeter portion having an elevation higher than an elevation of the first surface," as required by claim 2. Instead, the dummy printing part of Kozo, which corresponds to the mask film recited in claim 2, is not disclosed in the Abstract or shown in the Figures to have a perimeter having an elevation higher than an elevation of the surface of the dummy printing part 9.

Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 25 patentably distinguishes over Kuroki in combination with Kozo or Takenaka in combination with Kuroki in further combination with Kozo for at least the above-mentioned reasons.

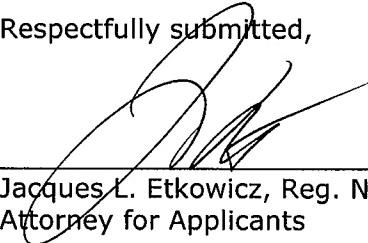
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Conclusion

In view of the claim amendments and remarks, Applicants submit the application is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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